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"How To Shoot, Index And Catalog Your Own Stock Footage", "Times have changed and along with it, the rules of stock footage. For getting successful as a stock footage photographer, you require to know what type of footage sells, how to shoot it and where to get it sold for the best monetary rewards.

In the past, consultant 35mm cameras like the Panavision were the only equipment cinematographers could use to supply footage to what were then a handful of stock libraries. A cameraman would need an outlay of a hundred thousand dollars to participate in the stock footage marketplace.

Once again, everything has shifted massively with the advent of the new semi-professional HD cameras that take 1080p movies. An investment that was once astronomical is now under five thousand dollars. You still need to know what to shoot and the most desirable way of finding out that is to work for a stock footage library.

most men and women don't have that opportunity so the next best thing is to spend quality time on the web portals of the premier stock footage companies to see what type of footage they feature. This will give you a hint of the kind of footage that sells. Obviously you won't be able to start with anything advanced like the lifestyle footage. This generally consists of people having a good time and requires the cooperation of friends, family or anyone who will sign a model release but it also requires a bit of acting technique.

SHOOTING YOUR OWN STOCK FOOTAGE

it is also much easier to shoot monuments and other inanimate objects before graduating to working with actual talent.

Another subject to avoid is nature since the royalty-free libraries have covered this to death and unless you happen to get a meteorite falling out of the sky, the chances of selling nature footage, even in HD, are pretty skinny. Also National Geographic has it's own stock footage library so you would be competing with the most desirable nature shooters around.

If you live in one of the world's fantastic cities, there are always plenty of opportunities to shoot stock footage: Traffic, monuments, crowds, ambulances streaming by, parks etc. But of course, the suburbs are always in demand for the many different TV shows and commercials which always need establishing shots of houses, Main Streets and suburban blocks of houses.

Once you have composed and captured your shots in your camera, you will then need to transfer them to a hard drive. This step also entails converting them to smaller files which is done very easily with a program like MPEGstreamclip.

How to Shoot

it's best to be fully organized during the rest of the process. I like to put my shots into files labeled with general categories like Ambulances, Parks, Traffic etc. and if a stock footage library is interested in putting them on a web presence, it is no problem to upload them by category.

Another good idea is to make a database that can be kept in the same general area as the converted files. That way, when you require to find something you can always do a search and locate it immediately. In the past it was difficult to keep track of shots because you had to add a number and/or timecode to it. The new cameras in fact number every shot for you which makes organization a lot easier.

How to Sell

different libraries work in different ways. With MrFootage for example all you need to do is send them a copy of your hard drive either by upload or snail mail. Most file formats will work including raw files but Mpeg4 is ideal. If you have meta data for your clips they will integrate them in their search engine and once the footage is online, they or you can add meta data on the fly. With your <http://stock.mrfootage.com/> HD footage uploaded on such popular libraries, prospects of it getting off the shelf grow manifold.

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